Intercollegiate Broadcasting System (IBS) Recollections

By Ted Anagnoson, Editor of College Radio Magazine, 1963?-1965

I was a sophomore at Lehigh in 1963 when somehow I came into contact with Fritz Kass, who talked me into joining him and Bob Freedman after they had taken over the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System. The old board members, I remember George Abraham, Dave Borst, and Bill Malone in particular, stayed on, and Fritz took over the administration of what was then a tape network and a trade association for college radio stations. I did the newsletter, which later became a magazine, the production of which was very primitive by today's standards. I think I typed the articles as I wrote and edited them, and then we hired a secretary/typist from Kelly Girls, now Kelly Secretarial Services, and the person hired would type the final version. The final copies were printed by Oscar, who was then the university printer, not on campus, but at his home, where he had a private printing service. I think he did the mailing, although I could be wrong. I think our circulation was about 500, but again this is just a guess. We did 3 or perhaps 4 issues per year.

We had board meetings 2-3 times a year. One of them was at George Abraham's house in Washington DC, which was at 3107 Westover Drive, SE (I've never forgotten the address) – which turned out to be on a hill with a magnificent 180 degree view of the city. George had a llama named Shasta, a pet, which attacked me, promoting a lot of jokes about my sex appeal for male llamas.

Another board meeting was at the airport motel at the Philadelphia airport, where the meeting rooms were on the ground floor, but the eating facilities were upstairs. We took the elevator after lunch from the first floor to the ground floor and got stuck. Since the board was largely composed of engineers, they took it upon themselves to open the hatch at the top of the elevator and the door above, and we all went out, one by one. I was pushing others up as I was very tall (6' 4 ½"), so I was last, and there was no one to push me up – but I reached up and they just grabbed me and pulled! It was hilarious. That was the last time I took an elevator one floor for many years.

We ran a tape network, sharing tapes of programs that got sent from a central location (I don't remember where, but not from Lehigh) to the various stations, we had the magazine, and we sought to represent the stations in different ways. One February Fritz said that he was proclaiming March to be college radio month – I asked whether there was some central clearing house for such things, and he pointed out the obvious to this naïve undergraduate, that organizations just proclaimed these things. After graduation Fritz went on to own a chain of Radio Shacks in the Albany, NY area, and then to running an airport near the Hudson in the West Point area.

Bob Freedman was a good student and went on to law school (I think at Columbia), but Fritz was on the "take 5/ pass 4 system" each semester – he did almost no reading except the night before the exam, and there were courses where he showed up only for the exams. He was a business major. He made up the difference in summer school and graduated sometime during the next year after his official graduation date of June 1964. I think Bob was a government major, and I was in international relations.

One of the board members was Dave Borst, who at some point moved to Los Angeles. About 25 years ago I got a call from Fritz out of the blue (we hadn't spoken since the late 1960s) asking if I would speak at Dave Borst's funeral in Palos Verdes, since I was working in LA at the time and lived in southern California. I consented to do so, and talked about how Dave would send me the newsletter back with

every grammatical error and spelling mistake circled, etc. Turned out that he did the same thing at the church!

At Lehigh we were in the basement of the University Center with the radio station, the Brown and White (student newspaper), and the journalism faculty and department offices. The department at that point had two faculty and a dedicated classroom, where we occupied one wall with a desk or two and a couple of file cabinets. We were careful not to be there when the department had classes, as one of the faculty was very cranky, and we were really intruders, not having gotten permission from anybody for what we were doing. We had some minimal relations with the college radio station, which was right across the hall from us and the classroom, and I read the news every once in a while if someone didn't show up, but I don't recall many relationships. Fritz and George Eustis, the chief engineer of the radio station were friends, and George was on the board later, and I think that perhaps Fritz had been the manager of the station at some point. Most of the above is speculation – take it with a grain of salt.

I remember that Fritz started every letter to the affiliated college radio stations the same way – "Now is the time!" I guess it was always "the time!"

Having been married to a very liberated woman now for 55 years, I am ashamed to say that at all-male Lehigh at that point we were inspired by Playboy's "Playmate of the Month" to have a "Studiomate of the Month," a college coed whom we put on the cover and about whom we had some short narrative inside the magazine. These were fully clothed head and shoulders shots only. The stations sent them in. I won't say anything in my defense, or Fritz's or Bob's, except that it was a different era, and we were trying to inspire interest in the magazine. I think also that Oscar wanted to try printing the covers in color.

We had a few ads, mostly from organizations that wanted ties with the college radio stations. I remember one page 1 headline of "No More Cig Ads," when the cigarette companies decided not to advertise on college radio any more in their effort to keep their cigarette production going. That might have been the first issue I did, but I can't swear to that.

When President Kennedy was shot in November 1963, the journalism classroom was crowded for the weekend with radio station and college newspaper people watching the TV that was there. We actually did some IBS work during slow periods.